THE UNRULY LEAVES.

A New Year's Story.

BY PETER M'ARTHUR.

Only a slight leverage is needed to turn a new leaf. The whole trouble lies in keeping it turned. Harold George is one of those comfortable young men who take themselves seriously and for that reason instinctively consider all girls frivolous. But Alma Page's frivolity was of the kind that pleased him because it set off his solid qualities so well, and he called on her so often that observant people began to talk of a match. Of course he poohpoohed such a possibility, but continued to enjoy himself by having a jolly time with her whenever the opportunity offered. As for Alma, she liked his society and to the best of her knowledge was wholly heart free.

This state of affairs had existed for many months and would perhaps have continued indefinitely had it not been for a chat they had one evening during the Christmas holidays.

"Oh, by the way," exclaimed Alma, "have you made any good resolutions for the new year?"

"Well, no, I can't say I have," replied Harold pompously.

"What a paragon you must be if you don't need to reform in any way! But perhaps you feel that you wouldn't have the power to keep a good resolution if you made it."

"As far as that is concerned you are mistaken. I know I have faults, as all men have, but as they have never caused me any trouble so far I don't feel the necessity of bothering myself about them. However, if you suggest anything in which I need a reform I will show you that it is not beyond me."

"Oh, dear no!" said Alma banteringly. "I wouldn't for the world do anything to disturb your poise! You are so perfectly balanced that the removal of even one of your faults would spoil your symmetry."

Harold was not quick of perception, but he realized that he was being laughed at, and in self defense he asked, "But what have you decided to give up?"

"I can't make up my mind. I have so many faults I don't know where to begin."

At this commonplace statement Harold laughed uproariously, as is the habit of men who have no sense of humor. Her air as she made the statement was so demure, however, that it added to her charm, and as he stopped laughing he looked at her with a patronizing sense of satisfaction that was new to him.

"I don't see what you are laughing at," said Alma, with a slight pout that was also bewitching. "I am sure there are lots of things that I should turn over a new leaf about."

Harold went off into another roar of laughter. The idea of this fluffy bundle of innocence having great faults was very absurd to him. When he finally stopped, she exclaimed:

"I'll tell you what let's do. Let us each think it over carefully and then decide to turn over a new leaf about something. We really should, you know, and besides it is the fashion at this time of year."

"All right; it is a bargain," he said.

While smoking his cigar on his way home Harold thought of his proposed reform and laughed to himself at the absurdity of it all. It was foolish of him to allow himself to be led into such nonsense by a girl, but what a girl she was! He had never thought much about her before, but on this night she had interested him. It is true she was frivolous, but so is every woman who is attractive. That she was young and fresh and beautiful was beyond question, and all she needed was a man of strong character, like himself, of course, to direct her and bring out the serious side of her nature. At this point a thought struck him so forcibly that he stopped abruptly with the cigar poised in his hand.

What if Alma was taking his attentions seriously? It was a disturbing thought, and he walked slowly as he turned it over in his mind. He had always considered it part of his destiny to marry, but he was waiting for the right woman and merely amusing himself in the meantime. But if Alma had learned to love him, and it was quite possible, he might be the cause of a cruel disappointment to her. Women feel such things so deeply, you know. As he thought it all over and recalled many trifling incidents the possibility became a probability, and he was not a little disgusted. But he never came to conclusions hastily, and it was not until New Year's eve that he made up his mind that perhaps Alma, after all, was the woman to make him happy. But before deciding finally he resolved to sound the depths of her character and stop meeting her frivolity with frivolity. Just then it occurred to him that in doing that he would be turning over a new leaf as he had promised to, and he chuckled over his own cleverness.

Alma in the meantime had canvassed her failings carefully and had decided that her besetting sin was flirting. True, she had never flirted much with any one but Harold, and his self satisfaction was so unspeakable that it was a temptation to tease him. But she really did not love him. He was not her Prince Charming by any means, and she would simply have to give up flirting with him. Full of this noble resolution she awaited his next visit.

On the first evening of the new year Harold attired himself faultlessly and called at the Page mansion. He had almost decided that Alma was the one woman he had ever met whom he would care to make his wife, and the impression was heightened when she swept into the room to greet him and wish him the compliments of the season. He had brought her a box of bonbons as a New Year's gift and was somewhat surprised by the staid and decorous way in which she received it. His surprise became positive when she said:

"Thank you so much, Mr. George. It is very kind of you to bring me this."

He expected that she would go into raptures as usual, and then the "Mr. George!" They had known one another from childhood, and she had always called him Harold.

"Why, what's the matter?" he asked.

"The matter? I don't understand!"

"But—'Mr. George!'"

"Well?"

"But you have always called me"—Then he realized that he was going to make himself ridiculous, and he stopped in some confusion. "You are not angry with me, are you?" he asked after an uncomfortable silence.

"Certainly not. What put that into your head?"

"But you are treating me so differently from the way you usually do, so"—

"I have always treated you politely, haven't I?"

"Oh, pshaw! I don't mean that. Now I insist on knowing," he began pettishly, but she interrupted him with some asperity.

"Insist, Mr. George! I never knew that you had any right to insist on anything with me."

"I don't mean that," he tried to explain, and in the meantime he was losing his temper rapidly at finding his plans so upset, "but you seem so queer tonight."

"Thanks for the compliment, Mr. George."

The iteration of "Mr. George" exasperated him completely, and he tried to say something, failed and then started toward the door, intending to leave the house. But at that moment Mrs. Page entered the room and wished him the compliments of the season.

It would not do to let her see that he was angry, so he chatted with her for a few minutes and gradually recovered his self control. In the meantime Alma had time to reflect that she had rather overdone her decorous conduct and was anxious to make up friends. To see him angry was something new, and it gave her a very unpleasant feeling about the heart. She didn't like to think of losing his friendship. Like a true woman, she promptly decided to let the new leaf she had turned over rustle back to its place and begin again with the old one. When her mother left the room, she ran up to Harold and, looking up into his eyes with the sweetest penitence, pleaded:

"Don't let us quarrel, Harold. I admit I didn't treat you nicely. Won't you let me sing you the new song I have learned?"

Going to the piano, she played her own accompaniment and sang the latest popular song, one that gave her an opportunity to look at him roguishly and flash her beautiful eyes to advantage. He was partly mollified and more in love than ever before she reached the last verse. Her sudden changes from dignity to frivolity bewildered him, but still she was beautiful in all her moods.

"Come!" she said, extending her hand to him. "We are friends again, aren't we? But you must confess you were not exactly the same as usual to me tonight. You were so woefully serious."

She did not withdraw her hand from his lingering clasp, for, like the impulsive creature she was, she overdid her reconciliation as she had her reform.

"Yes, I was more serious than usual," he said, still holding her hand, "but that was because I had made up my mind to turn over a new leaf."

"And it was because I had turned over a new leaf that I was"— Then she stopped and blushed furiously. It would never do to tell him her resolution, and she withdrew her hand, and blushes became her as much as smiles.

"Oh, what was your resolution?" she asked gayly, trying to cover her confusion.

"I had made up my mind to discover—no, I have made up my mind—I love you, Alma! Will you be my wife?"

"I didn't expect this!" she whispered. "Oh, you must give me time to think!"

"Then you do not love me!" he said blankly.

"I don't know. I always liked you and want to be friends. And to stop flirting with you was my good resolution."

"I want you to stop flirting with me," he said eagerly. "I want you to be in earnest."

"Oh, it is all so sudden!" she protested. "Let us not turn over new leaves, but go back with the old ones just as we were for awhile."

"No," he said doggedly. "I have turned over a new leaf, and over it stays. I want you to be my wife and not simply a jolly friend."

This speech was in every way characteristic of him, and as she looked at him she felt very weak and foolish in the presence of his firmness and strength. She wanted very much to cry and knew that was foolish, too, but every second she felt herself yielding to his dominant will, and when he suddenly clasped her in his arms she made no resistance.

After that what a trouble they had with their new leaves! Now that he claimed a proprietary interest in her, Harold simply couldn't help meeting Alma's frivolity with frivolity and unbending cumbrously in response to her gayety. And she found it more delightful than ever to flirt with him now that their little quarrel had made them realize how dear they were to each other. But before the next season of good resolutions had come around they made up their minds that it was altogether too much trouble to turn over two new leaves and keep them turned. So they decided to confine themselves to one leaf and to turn it over together.

"DON'T LET US QUARREL, HAROLD."

Grandma's Cat Story.

"I had a stepfather," said the pleasant faced old grandmother, when asked for a story at the family gathering, "and he liked to see me working about the house instead of playing with a kitten, so he ordered me to throw it in the brook which ran through our meadow.

"I was forced to do it, though I cried a great deal. I threw it in three times, but the little thing struggled out each time and finally dragged itself home after me. Then I pleaded so much that I was allowed to keep it.

"From that time on it was kind of wild, not staying in the house, but skulking around the barn. When it was full grown, it began to kill our chickens, so my stepfather said it had to go. This time he caught it and tied a stone around it and drowned it. After an hour or two he drew it from the water and buried it.

"Now comes the part that is stranger than fiction. Two days after the same old yellow cat dragged itself up to the barn. We visited the place where we had buried it and found it had come to life and rid itself of the stone, in what way I know not, and dug itself out.

"It staid by the edge of our woods, getting the milk I set out every now and then, but disappeared when winter came."—Philadelphia Call.

Braved the Bandits.

One of the stories of the late Cornelius Vanderbilt illustrates his personal courage. While he was in Europe with his sons years ago he sent word to Mr. Depew, who was in London, that the boys wanted to visit the tomb of Agamemnon, in Greece. As the holding up of trains upon the railroad which he would have to take to reach Argos was by no means rare, Mr. Depew sought to dissuade him from the idea. Mr. Vanderbilt, however, insisted upon going. At Vienna, through some delay, the party missed the train it was to have taken and was forced to take the next one.

Mr. Vanderbilt learned afterward that the first train had been held up in the mountains by robbers and that four men, who had been mistaken for his party, had been taken from it. These men were forced to raise $10,000 before they regained their liberty.

Varying Effects of Accidents.

"Years ago," said a Maine man, "I was standing beside a gun at a state muster at Augusta when a salute to the governor, who had just come on the field, was being fired. The cannon used was of the old fashioned kind, and it was prematurely discharged, with the result that the index finger of the right hand of the man ramming the load home was blown off. The shock, together with the lodgment of flying particles of powder, had the effect of driving the blood back from the wound, during which fragment of time the injured man calmly examined his mangled hand, but when the blood did come back it came with a rush and fairly bubbled out in a torrent. The man's calmness left him as if by magic at the sight of the blood, and, with a loud scream, he keeled over in a dead faint.

"They used to tell a story of two men who were working on opposite sides of a buzzsaw. The attention of one becoming momentarily distracted, he ran his finger against the saw, and the severed piece dropped on the other side, where his partner was working. That worthy picked it up and, with the casual remark, 'Bill, you've dropped something,' handed it back to its owner. Bill didn't faint, but it is only owing to the superior burst of speed developed by his partner that he is not doing time for homicide."—New York Tribune.

Cabs Not Admitted.

Americans visiting London for the first time are more than likely to hail a hansom the day they arrive and start promptly to see the row. Half the books, stories, newspaper articles, etc., treating of English life make prominent mention of this the smartest driveway in the world. London society circles largely about Hyde park, and naturally enough tourists regard it as a good starting place from which to study British manners and peoples.

Imagine, then, the indignation and the disgust of a pair of pretty girls, accustomed to traverse home drives in any fashion they like, warned back from Hyde park entrance by a six foot arm of the law. No tips, no remonstrance, no pleading, has the slightest effect upon the stern "bobby," who simply orders cabby to depart and tells his fares to get a more correct equipage if they desire to take part in the row parade.

It is livery or nothing, and if the visitor continues to long for a glimpse of the Hyde park show she must have boots and breeches to drive her, thereby having at least the semblance of a private establishment. No admittance is the standing rule for the ostensible cab.—Boston Globe.

A Bad Man to Interrupt.

"W'en Moses tell de sun ter stan' still"— began the old deacon.

"Dat warn't Moses," interjected a brother in the amen corned; "dat wuz Joshua!"

"Ez I said," continued the deacon, "w'en Joshua tell de sun"—

"Yoh didn't say dat at all!" said the brother who had corrected him. "Hit wuz me dat said hit! Hit wuz me dat tuck yoh up to hit!"

The deacon's patience was exhausted. He folded his brass rimmed spectacles, laid them carefully on the table before him, walked over to the amen corner, took the objecting brother by both arms from behind and, with the swish of a cyclone, swept him forward toward the door, landing him precipitately in outer darkness.

"Ez I wuz sayin foh dis little incident occurred," he continued, "w'en Moses tole Joshua ter tell de sun ter stan' still"—

Some of the older, learned brethren moved uneasily in their seats. They looked as if they wanted to correct him, but they did not. They let it go at that.—Atlanta Constitution.

Character In the Hair.

If your hair is fine, it denotes gentle birth. If the ends cling together, it is a sign of great intellectuality, and a tendency to curl shows inherent grace and a poetic nature.

These are some of the things set forth by the science of hair reading, yet undeveloped, but likely to "give us away" in a manner often more accurate than pleasing.

This science tells us, too, that the person with straight hair has a firm, positive and practical disposition. Color shows the temperament. For instance, it is well to watch out for the person with black, lusterless hair. He's apt to be treacherous and jealous. The lighter the hair the more sensitive and "touchy" its owner. Brown hair belongs to him who has common sense, good judgment and reason in high degree, which would indicate that humanity isn't even half bad. Red hair shows honesty and cleverness.

The Turkish Autocrat.

The sultan of Turkey rises at 6 and after devoting the whole morning to work with his secretaries breakfasts at noon. After this he takes a drive or a row on the lake in his vast park. At 8 he dines and amuses himself during the evening with his family, listening while his daughter plays on the piano. He is extremely fond of music. The sultan dresses like an English gentleman, but invariably in a frock coat, the breast of which on great occasions is richly embroidered and blazing with decorations. There are over 400 cooks and scullions employed in the imperial palace.

Suspicions Aroused.

Smith—What's wrong, old man? You look worried.

Jones—I am. You know I had my life insured last week?

Smith—Yes, but what has that got to do with it?

Jones—Well, the very next day my wife bought a new cookbook. Possibly it's all right, but it certainly looks suspicious.—Chicago News.

GETTING EVEN.

The Terrible Revenge of a Small Elevator Boy.

"I got even with that typewriter girl with de yeller hair, betcherlife!" said the elevator boy as he stood aside to let the fat man out. "Say, what do you think? She tried to throw me down on me job. That's right. Said I was disrespectful and didn't attend to business. Wouldn't that grind you? But it didn't work, not on yer life! De boss said he couldn't get along without me and promised to raise me wages if I would be good!

"That typewriter girl with de yeller hair is awfully sweet on a Willie boy what works four floors down, and de Willie boy is blowing in his ten per to keep up appearances. He shoves a bouquet as big as a cabbage up this elevator every day by special messenger, and it made me tired.

"Well, de udder day I took a messenger boy up with a whole flower garden for de girl, and I saw de kid was looking around for something.

"'What is de matter, pard?' I asked.

"'Lost de address,' said he.

"'That's all right,' said I. 'I kin put you next. Seventh floor, third office to de right, redheaded girl.'

"That was all right, but de girl who works in de same office is sweet on de same Willie boy.

"Well, that boy gave de redheaded girl de flower garden, and de yeller haired girl had a fit.

"Say, you oughter see that yeller haired girl give that Willie boy de marble heart when they met in de elevator going down. Willie boy is putting his money in a savings bank now, and de girl is looking around for another feller."—Detroit Free Press.

Types of Our Ancestors.

THE FIRST DOCTOR.

—Types.

The True Version.

Miles Standish paused in his nervous pacing of the floor as John Alden entered.

"Well," he asked anxiously, "you come from Priscilla? Did you say a good word for me?"

"Yes," replied John, "and she said a good word for you herself."

"Ah!"

"When I told her of your love, she exclaimed, 'Heavens!'"—Philadelphia Press.

What He Did.

Irate Father—I don't wish to hear any more of your falsehoods, young man. You told me that when you visited your sick friend you didn't sit down all night.

The Junior—And I still say so.

"Don't tell me. I've heard differently."

"But, you see, sir, I sat up."—Yonkers Herald.

Just After the Blizzard.

"That's your tallest policeman, eh?" said the stranger in surprise. "He looks to me about the height of an ordinary man."

"Three or four feet of him is down in the snow," explained the Chicago man, who was showing the stranger the sights of the city.—Chicago Tribune.

Would Have Been Hard on Her.

"I wish I had studied law," she said regretfully.

"It would have been a bitter experience for you," he answered.

"Why so?" she demanded.

"You would have had to let the judge have the last word."—Chicago Post.

Yes, Our Wife Got Him.

He—I suppose you wouldn't accept the best man on earth?

She—Oh, he's snapped up and married long ago.—Chicago Record.

How're They Coming With You?

I started round the other day
To satisfy myself
How fast the general public
Was accumulating wealth.
Each individual I met
I interviewed, you see,
So now I'll try and tell you what
Some of them told me.

A shoemaker said he was "pegging away,"
Lawyer was "lying low,"
A doctor was making his money "dead easy;"
It's the truth—they told me so.
A butcher managed to make "ends meat,"
The iceman had "struck a frost,"
The plumber I met was "hitting the pipe;"
Poor fellow, I guess he's lost.

A pickpocket was "taking things easy,"
While a baker was "loafing all day;"
A grocer told me in confidence
That "things were going his weigh."
A dentist was "filling from hand to mouth,"
And here, just to make a rhyme,
I'll have to ring in the jeweler
Who was working, of course, "overtime."

A burglar said, "Times were picking up,"
But he had to work at night,
And even a poor blind beggar said
He was "doing out of sight."
An osified man was having
An awful "hard time," he said,
While an undertaker told me
He was "doing quite well—on the dead."

I asked a spiritualist how things were,
"Just medium," he replied.
A barber said he was "scraping along"
And then curled up and died.
A furrier "ran a skin game,"
A jockey was "on the go,"
But it turned my head when a dressmaker said
She was doing "so and sew."

—William Lorc. Read in National Laundry Journal.